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input devices from the active data processing system to said another data processing system, wherein said another data processing system becomes the active data processing system.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (amended) The automatic input switching device of claim 15, wherein the output connections further comprise universal serial bus connections.

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated October 22, 2002, having a shortened statutory period set to expire January 22, 2003. In the present Amendment, Claims 4-5, 8, 10-12, 16-17 are canceled, and Claims 1, 6-7, 15 and 18 are amended. Thus, Claims 1-3, 6-7, 9, 13-15 and 18 are now pending.

In paragraph 1 of the present Office Action, Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,069,615 to *Abraham et al. (Abraham)*. That rejection is respectfully traversed insofar as it might be applied to the claims as amended herein, and favorable reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

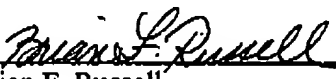
Applicant believes that *Abraham* does not render the present claims unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103 because that reference does not teach or suggest each feature recited in Claim 1 as amended herein. In particular, *Abraham* does not teach or suggest "switching means, responsive to the active data processing system signaling movement of the cursor past a logical common boundary between two logical display areas, for automatically switching transmission of signals from the single set of input devices from the active data processing system to another data processing system," (emphasis supplied) as now recited in exemplary Claim 1. With respect to this feature, which was formerly recited in Claim 4 (canceled herein), page 5, paragraph 1 of the present

Office Action cites Fig. 1-2 and col. 2, lines 32-67 and col. 3, lines 1-9 of *Abraham*.

The cited passages and other passages of *Abraham* teach two embodiments of a method and system for using a single pointing device as an input device for multiple computers. In the first embodiment, *Abraham's* fanout switching unit 28, based upon mouse inputs indicating movement of the cursor a full screen width, transfers control to a neighboring computer (col. 2, lines 41-49). In the second embodiment, the user first initializes fanout switching unit 28 to identify particular "hot zones" on the display at which control is to be transferred between computers. Importantly, in both embodiments, fanout switching unit 28 detects the need to transfer control between computers based upon inputs from the single set of input devices and not based upon signals from the computers. Thus, in contrast to the invention recited in amended Claim 1, *Abraham* does not teach or suggest "switching means, responsive to the active data processing system signaling movement of the cursor past a logical common boundary between two logical display areas, for automatically switching transmission of signals from the single set of input devices from the active data processing system to another data processing system." Applicant therefore believes that the rejection of exemplary Claim 1, similar Claims 7 and 18 and their respective dependent claims is overcome.

No fee or extension of time is believed to be required; however, in the event any fee, including a fee for an extension of time, is required, please charge that fee to Deposit Account No. 50-0259.

Respectfully submitted,


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REDACTED CLAIMS

1. (amended) A set of data processing systems operating utilizing a single set of input devices, comprising:

a single set of input devices including a pointing device;

at least two data processing systems sharing the single set of input devices, each data processing system having a logical display area logically arranged to have at least one boundary in common with a logical display area for another data processing system, wherein a pointer driven cursor controlled by the pointing device is located within a logical display area for an active data processing system receiving input signals from the single set of input devices; and

switching means including an input controller coupled to said single set of input device and to each of said at least two data processing systems, wherein said switching means, responsive to the active data processing system signaling movement of the cursor past a logical common boundary between two logical display areas, for automatically switching transmission of signals from the single set of input devices from the active data processing system to another data processing system corresponding to a logical display area sharing the logical common boundary with the logical display area for the active data processing system, wherein the other data processing system becomes the active data processing system.

2. (unchanged) The set of data processing systems of claim 1, wherein the at least two data processing systems further comprise:

an array of data processing system displays, each data processing system display corresponding to a different data processing system having a logical display area.

3. (unchanged) The set of data processing systems of claim 1, wherein the switching means further comprises:

a universal serial bus connection of the single set of input devices to each data processing system.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

6. (amended) The set of data processing systems of claim [1] 2, further comprising:

a logical arrangement of display areas for the at least two data processing systems which corresponds to a physical configuration of display devices for the at least two data processing systems, wherein logical display areas for data processing systems having physically adjacent display devices share a logical common boundary.

7. (amended) A method for operating multiple data processing systems using a single set of input devices, said method comprising:

an active data processing system receiving signals from a pointing device within the single set of input devices controlling movement of a cursor within a first logical display area for [an] the active data processing system [receiving input signals from the single set of input devices]; [and]

responsive to movement of the cursor past a logical common boundary between [two] the first logical display area[s] and a second[, each] logical display area [corresponding to a different] of an inactive data processing system, said active data processing system signaling an input controller coupled to said active data processing system and coupled to the inactive data processing system; and

in response to said signaling by said active data processing system, said input controller automatically switching transmission of signals from the single set of input devices from the active data processing system to said inactive [another] data processing system [corresponding to a display area sharing the logical common boundary with the display area for the active data processing system], [wherein] such that the [other] inactive data processing system becomes the active data processing system and input signals from the single set of input devices control movement of the cursor within the second logical display area.

8. (canceled)

9. (unchanged) The method of claim 8, further comprising:

connecting the data processing systems to the input controller utilizing a universal serial bus;

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (canceled)

13. (unchanged) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

arranging logical display areas for the data processing systems to correspond to a physical configuration of display devices for the data processing systems, wherein logical display areas for data processing systems having physically adjacent display devices share a logical common boundary.

14. (unchanged) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

arranging logical display areas for the data processing systems in an array of contiguous logical display areas.

15. (amended) An automatic input switching device, comprising:

an input controller;

an input connection within the input controller for a single set of input devices including a pointing device;

output connections within the input controller for at least two data processing systems;

switching logic within the input controller at least two data processing systems transmitting input signals from the single set of input devices to an active data processing system,

wherein the switching logic, responsive to receipt of signaling from the active data processing system indicative of movement of a cursor [within the display area of the active data processing system] past a logical common boundary between the logical display area of the active

data processing system and a logical display area for another data processing system, automatically switches transmission of the input signals from the single set of input devices from the active data processing system to [the other] said another data processing system [corresponding to the display area sharing the logical common boundary with the display area for the active data processing system], wherein [the other] said another data processing system becomes the active data processing system.

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (amended) The automatic input switching device of claim 15, wherein the output connections further comprise universal serial bus connections[:

output connections to a plurality of data processing systems each having a logical display area, wherein the logical display areas are arranged in a contiguous array corresponding to physical positions of display devices for the data processing systems; wherein display areas for data processing systems having adjacent display devices share a logical common boundary].